



1/31/2018

VIA EMAIL

Matthew Sites, Associate AIA
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
300 Richards Boulevard, 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Powerhouse Alley Lofts (Z17-231)

Dear Mr. Sites:

WALKSacramento appreciates the opportunity to comment on Powerhouse Alley Lofts (Z17-231). The project requests the subdivision of one parcel at 1617 18th Street on Powerhouse Alley into four parcels, each to be developed with a three-story single family residential unit. WALKSacramento submitted comments (see enclosure) dated February 16, 2017 on an earlier version of the project, P16-061, which had five parcels with a studio unit and three-bedroom unit in a duplex on each parcel. We made recommendations for pedestrian lighting and natural surveillance of the alley to improve pedestrian safety.

This 2017 version of Powerhouse Alley Lofts seems to incorporate the same alley lighting the 2016 version had – an overhead light on the power pole on the alley about 10' east of the middle of the existing parcel. This will be inadequate to illuminate the alley for pedestrian safety and comfort in front of each of the proposed houses.

The proposed houses retain about the same limited amount of natural surveillance ("eyes on the alley"). The third floor bedrooms facing the alley in the 2016 project have been replaced with open air decks. The master bedroom that opens onto each deck will provide some activation and "eyes on the alley", but the impact would have been greater if the room was active living space, such as a family room or kitchen.

The proposed project incorporates an outdoor stairway from the alley frontage to the main entry door for each house. A secondary entrance on the side of the building behind a wing gate is also provided. As opposed to the original plan that had both entry doors on the side of the house, this design will provide an entryway that's within view of people on the alley and possibly on adjacent properties.

Considering that "eyes on the alley" has been marginally improved by the open air deck and main entry stairway, it is more important to provide high-quality illumination of the alley at each end of the project's frontage on the alley with pedestrian-friendly characteristics including low temperature light sources with minimal blue light in the spectrum, low glare and lower brightness.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and recommendations. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Manager

Enclosures: Powerhouse Alley Lofts WALKSac 20160216 Letter
Development Checklist for Biking and Walking

Powerhouse Alley Lofts WALKSac 20170216 Letter



2/16/2017

VIA EMAIL

Matthew Sites, Associate AIA
 City of Sacramento Community Development Department
 300 Richards Boulevard, 3rd Floor
 Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Powerhouse Alley Lofts (P16-061)

Dear Mr. Sites:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the routing for Powerhouse Alley Lofts (P16-061) and we offer the following comments.

Pedestrian Lighting on the Alley

Pedestrian lighting is an important part of the street infrastructure to provide safety and security for pedestrians. Illumination of the sidewalk helps to prevent falls by allowing pedestrians to see the surface they're walking upon and it allows drivers to see that pedestrians are present and may be approaching the street, it can reduce the incidence of crime and increase the sense of safety by allowing pedestrians to see potential threats in the area and allowing occupants of nearby buildings to see activity along the sidewalk.

Powerhouse Alley Lofts should provide lighting to strengthen pedestrian safety and security for their residents at the entrance to their property and on the alley. The Central City Neighborhood Design Guidelines makes the following recommendations in Section 3, Project Design Guidelines.

D. Lighting

3.D.1.1. Building Entries: Every building entry, including entries to individual dwelling units and shops, should be lighted. Entry lights should be controlled by a photocell switch.

3.D.2.3. Alleys: New construction or substantial renovation within 20 feet of the property line which abuts an alley should include light fixtures that illuminate the alley.

K. Alley Development 1. The Character of Alleys Principle: Develop projects that face on alleys to enhance the general livability, visual quality and safety of the alley.

3.1.1.7. Provide private lighting that illuminates the alley to a minimum of .25 foot candles with fixtures at a minimum of 40'-0" on center (See Section 3.D., Lighting, for further guidelines).

Light fixtures should be placed on the building near the gates and above the garage doors to eliminate hiding places and illuminate the walking surfaces. However, light fixtures on the

Powerhouse Alley Lofts WALKSac 20170216 Letter

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buildings may not provide adequate illumination of the alley without the light intruding on adjacent properties and/or creating a source of glare. The tentative maps indicate there is a power pole with a light fixture in the alley between Lots 3 and 4, but this may be insufficient lighting for each of the proposed houses. There are power poles in the alley near the west side of Lot 1 and the east side of Lot 5 that might be used for additional alley lighting.

“Eyes on the Alley”

Natural surveillance of the alley, or “eyes on the alley”, increases the possibility that criminal activity on the alley will be observed, thereby discouraging such activity. While creating more destinations along the alley and increasing the alley’s usage as a pedestrian and bicycle travel way can increase legitimate activity on the alley to provide more “eyes” at the alley level, providing surveillance of the alley from adjoining buildings is essential. The Central City Neighborhood Design Guidelines makes the following recommendation in Section 3, Project Design Guidelines.

K. Alley Development 1. The Character of Alleys Principle: Develop projects that face on alleys to enhance the general livability, visual quality and safety of the alley.

3.K.1.3. Maximize the number of individual entries, porches and windows from habitable rooms that provide surveillance and place definition. (See Section 3.A., Site/Planning.)

The Powerhouse Alley Lofts will provide some additional “eyes on the alley” with bedroom windows and balconies facing the alley. The presence of windows provides the impression that people may be able to see activity on the alley, but the bedroom use of all rooms facing the alley means the rooms will be occupied primarily at night. During the day, surveillance of the alley will be limited.

Providing a mix of alley-facing passive- and active-living room uses, such as half the rooms being bedrooms and the other half being living rooms and kitchens, would provide the greatest potential for “eyes on the alley.”

WALKSacramento is working to support increased physical activity such as walking and bicycling in local neighborhoods as well as helping to create community environments that support walking and bicycling. The benefits include improved physical fitness, less motor vehicle traffic congestion, better air quality, and a stronger sense of cohesion and safety in local neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and recommendations. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me at (916) 446-9255 or cholm@walksacramento.org.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Manager

Attachment: Development Checklist for Biking and Walking

DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST for BIKING and WALKING

Prepared by WALKSacramento and SABA (Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates)

September 2012

This checklist is provided to give an indication of design, engineering, and policy elements that we consider when reviewing development projects.

POLICIES

- Walking and biking is a priority
- Adopted a policy to develop a full multi-modal and ADA accessible transportation system

Project Review and Comment

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Pedestrian Master Plan
- Bicycle Master Plan
- Regional Blueprint
- Regional Blueprint Consistent General Plans
- Adopted Climate Action Plans
- Subdivision ordinances to support pedestrian and bicycle access and safety
- Zoning ordinance to support pedestrian and bicycle access and safety

ENGINEERING

- SIDEWALKS & BIKELANES ON BOTH SIDES OF MAJOR ROADWAYS
 - Pedestrian Level of Service "C" or better on arterials
 - Bicycle Level of Service "C" or better on arterials
- SAFE CROSSINGS FOR PEDESTRIANS
 - every 300-600 feet on major arterials
 - well lit, marked crosswalks
 - audible signals & count-down signals
 - median refuge islands
- SPEED MANAGEMENT
 - Speed limits based on safety of pedestrians and bicyclists
 - Implement "road diets" where there is excess lane capacity
- STREET DESIGN STANDARDS
 - Maximize pedestrian and bicyclist safety
 - Sidewalks buffered by trees and landscaping on major arterials
 - Vertical curbs
 - 5' minimum sidewalk widths, 8' in front of schools
 - 6' minimum bike lanes on busy streets

- ❑ INTERSECTIONS
 - Median refuge islands for pedestrians
 - Signal timing to enable safe passage
 - Signal detection for bicyclists
 - Crossings on all 4 legs of intersections

- ❑ ELIMINATE BARRIERS
 - Freeway, railroad, river and creek crossings
 - Obstructions in sidewalks and bike lanes

NEW DEVELOPMENT – REQUIRE

- ❑ Walking & bicycling circulation plans for all new development
- ❑ Direct and convenient connections to activity centers, including schools, stores, parks, transit
- ❑ Mixed uses and other transit supporting uses within ¼ mile of light rail stations or bus stops with frequent service
- ❑ Minimum width streets
- ❑ Maximum block length of 400'
- ❑ 4-lane maximum for arterials; Recommend 2 lanes wherever possible

NEW DEVELOPMENT – DISCOURAGE

- ❑ Cul-de-sacs (unless it includes bike/ped connections)
- ❑ Gated and/or walled communities
- ❑ Meandering sidewalks
- ❑ Inappropriate uses near transit (gas stations, drive-thru restaurants, mini storage and other auto dependent uses)

BUILDINGS – REQUIRE

- ❑ Direct access for pedestrians from the street
- ❑ Attractive and convenient stairways
- ❑ Bicycle parking – long & short term
- ❑ Shower & clothing lockers

OLDER NEIGHBORHOODS

- ❑ Improve street crossings
- ❑ Reduce speeds
- ❑ Provide new connections
- ❑ Create short cuts for walkers and bicyclists by purchase of properties or other means
- ❑ Provide sidewalks on both sides of major streets

Policy Review and Comment

ENFORCEMENT & MAINTENANCE

- ❑ Enforce speed limits
- ❑ Enforce crosswalk rules – conduct crosswalk sting operations
- ❑ Enforce restrictions against parking on sidewalks
- ❑ Enforce bicycle rules including riding with traffic, lights at night, stopping at red lights
- ❑ Implement CVC 267 setting speed limits based on pedestrian and bicyclist safety
- ❑ Sweep streets and fix hazards
- ❑ Repair and replace broken sidewalks

EDUCATION

- ❑ Train staff on pedestrian and bicycle facility design.
- ❑ Train development community about pedestrian and bicycle planning and safety issues
- ❑ Bicycle skills training

FUNDING

- ❑ Include pedestrian and bicycle facilities in capital improvement programs
- ❑ Include pedestrian and bicycle facilities as a part of roadway widening and improvement projects
- ❑ Support Measure A pedestrian and bicycle facility allocation
- ❑ Set priorities based on safety and latent demand
- ❑ SACOG Community Design grants & Bike/Ped grants
- ❑ California Bicycle transportation Account
- ❑ Safe Routes to School

www.walksacramento.org

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